

Pipeline Memo Cover Page

Briefing Title/Topic: Streetcar Security & Fare Data Collection

Submitting Department: Transportation

Memo Author: Curtis Ailes & Chris Eilerman

SECTION A: Basic Information & Key Stakeholders

TYPE OF STAKEHOLDER	FIRST NAME, LAST NAME	DEPARTMENT
Mayoral Executive Team Sponsor:	Choose an item.	MOS
Mayoral Senior Staff Stakeholder(s):	Choose an item. ; Choose an item.	MOS
Budget Lead :	Saroja Reddy	CBO
Budget Analyst(s) :	Christie Parker ; Choose an item.	CBO
Innovation & Performance Team Members: (Leave blank if this is not applicable to your submission.)	Choose an item. ; Choose an item.	CBO/IP
MOS Policy Advisors(s):	Elliot Helmbrecht	MOS
Department Director(s): (Please list each relevant Department Director, one director per line, with their department listed in the far-right column. Please add lines for each additional Director.)	Sam Zimbabwe	SDOT
Departmental Staff Stakeholders: (Please list each relevant staff member, one per line, with their department listed in the far-right column. Please add a line for each additional staff member.)	Chris Eilerman	SDOT
	Curtis Ailes	SDOT
	Candida Lorenzana	SDOT
	Karen Melanson	SDOT
	Kristen Simpson	SDOT

Departmental Pipeline Liaison(s): <i>(There may be multiple, please list all liaisons for every department represented. Please list one per line, with their department listed in the far-right column. Please add a line for each additional Liaison.)</i>	Bill LaBorde	SDOT
	Elliot Helmbrecht	MO

SECTION B: Briefing Attendees

INSTRUCTIONS: Generally, you may list a lot of people in Section B as, "Key Stakeholders." In this section, please list out whom should be invited to any in-person briefings that we schedule for this topic. Essentially, we are trying to understand the difference between people who need to be kept aware of updates on the issue vs. who needs to be present for any discussion/work done on the issue. The Mayor's Executive Team and Senior Staff are automatically invited to each Pipeline E-Team briefing, so there is no need to list them here. Please do list relevant Budget Analysts, Leads, Policy Advisors or other relevant Mayor's Office Staff. Please list one staff member per line and add lines as needed. If there is no difference between the Key Stakeholders and Briefing Attendees, please check the box below.

☐ **The Key Stakeholders are the same as Briefing Attendees.**

Staff Member Name	Job Title (if known)	Staff Member Department (Acronym)
<i>E.G. Dayana Vice</i>	<i>Pipeline Manager</i>	<i>CBO/MOS</i>

SECTION C: Logistical Information About this Submission

Supporting materials:

Document Name	Document Type (PDF, Word, Excel...)
1) Security Incident trends - 2015-19	PDF
2)	

This document, and attached supporting materials, has been sent to relevant CBO/OPI staff and relevant E-Team/Senior Staff Lead (as applicable) 72 hours prior to submission to MO_Briefings. ☐

Please check all that may apply to this submission:

Public Rollout Involving the Mayor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Event Already Scheduled	<input type="checkbox"/>	Legal Review Required	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legislation (to write, transmit, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Significant Budget Impacts	<input type="checkbox"/>	Operational Support Required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Communications Strategy Needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Significant Policy Impacts	<input type="checkbox"/>	IDT or Cabinet Involved	<input type="checkbox"/>
Council Briefing Upcoming	<input type="checkbox"/>	SLI Response Due to Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify in Summary)	<input type="checkbox"/>



City of Seattle

Mayor Jenny A. Durkan

Date: 7/22/2019
To: Mayor Jenny Durkan and/or her Executive Team and/or her Senior Staff
From: Sam Zimbabwe, Director, SDOT
Authors: Chris Eilerman, Streetcar & Transit Corridors Manager, SDOT
Curtis Ailes, Streetcar Operations Manager, SDOT

Overview of the Issue

Topic/Issue Title: Streetcar Security & Fare Data Collection

Please select one Briefing Function:

Briefing Function	✓
General Update Only	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Key Policy Impact/Change	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial Permission Required	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delivery of Information Requested from Mayor or E-Team	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direction needed on next steps	<input type="checkbox"/>

Objective of this Briefing: Provide overview of security and fare issues on the Seattle Streetcar and proposed next steps to address these issues.

Summary of Topic/Issue: Over the past year, SDOT observed an increase in security incidents on the First Hill Streetcar (FHS). In addition, SDOT has experienced large increases in ridership on the FHS line. While fare revenue on FHS is up slightly, fare revenue has not increased at the same rate as ridership. To address the rise in security issues SDOT is considering whether an increased security and/or fare enforcement presence is needed on the Seattle Streetcar. Before deciding whether more stringent fare enforcement is necessary, SDOT would like to gain a better understanding of the reasons behind streetcar riders' fare payment activity. Therefore, SDOT is proposing the use of Metro Rapid Ride fare enforcement officers to provide an increased security presence and to collect data.

Background:

Security Concerns

SDOT strives to provide a safe, comfortable, and pleasant transit experience for streetcar transit riders and operations staff. Since 2016, Metro and SDOT operations staff have observed an increase in the number of reported security incidents onboard the First Hill Streetcar line. These incidents include unruly passenger

behavior, threats to operators, and passenger harassment. Security incidents are catalogued by Metro Security via a Security Incident Report (SIR). These incident reports can be generated by observations of streetcar operators, reports from the public through Metro's customer service outlet, and rider complaints or inquiries submitted to SDOT and shared with Metro Streetcar Operations staff. The attached charts show the number of SIRs generated on the FHS and SLU lines from January 2015 – February 2019. While incidents on the SLU line have remained consistent, the data show a 50% increase in incidents (12 SIR's) on the FHS line from 2017-2018. In 2018, FHS had 36 SIRs. By comparison, the Rapid Ride E line had 34 and the Rapid Ride A line had 38 in the month of June 2019 alone.

The increase in SIRs is an item that has been flagged by Metro as part of SDOT/Metro's regular streetcar hazard monitoring activities with WSDOT, the State Safety Oversight Agency (SSOA) for the Seattle Streetcar. The increase was added to the streetcar hazard log, which is reviewed jointly with SDOT, Metro streetcar safety & security, and WSDOT on a monthly basis. While we continue to monitor security incident trends, should security incidents become the subject of further concern and scrutiny by WSDOT, it is possible that WSDOT could, as part of its oversight, request that SDOT take further steps to mitigate.

Metro, as the contracted operator of the Streetcar, has also expressed concern about the increasing number of incidents, especially those involving threats or harassment of streetcar operators. Safety and security for operators is a top priority for Metro and Metro has undertaken efforts on their bus services to reduce operator assaults, threats, or harassment. From January 2015 through February 2019, unruly or disturbing behavior and threats against streetcar operators were the top two most frequent type of security incidents reported. Unruly or disturbing behavior accounted for 20 occurrences while threats against streetcar operators represented 12 of the total 105 security incidents.

Proposal to Utilize King County Metro Fare Enforcement Officers

In late 2018, SDOT Streetcar operations staff consulted King County Metro about the possibility of partnering with Metro to utilize Metro fare enforcement officers (FEOs) on Seattle Streetcar to provide a visual presence to deter security incidents and a fare enforcement presence to collect data and encourage proper ORCA and fare usage.

Metro offered to leverage the services of their Rapid Ride FEOs on streetcars. These FEOs are contracted by Metro through Securitas, a third-party vendor. The program would provide 2 FEOs, 4 hours daily, 7 days a week providing primarily customer service functions. The FEOs would be authorized to provide security functions like those performed on Rapid Ride.

Should a more stringent fare enforcement policy be necessary, the Metro Rapid Ride model provides an opportunity to utilize existing systems with which a portion of the public is familiar. Fare enforcement officers would be authorized to issue citations for non-payment which would be adjudicated through Metro's new Fare Violation Program. This new program, launched in January 2019, began with an extensive survey effort to collect data about ridership and fare payment behaviors. It was developed in response to an internal County audit of Metro's fare enforcement program which cited Metro for unfairly targeting homeless populations. The new program, based on input from community advocate organizations, aims to address the findings of the County audit. Instead of a punitive program with offenders being issued \$125 citations for non-payment, initial warnings offer information on how to obtain low or no-fare passes. Offenders are first given a warning and their name and address is collected. Second offenses include a citation, but instead of the \$125 ticket, options exist for "curing" the violation by loading money on an existing ORCA, ORCA LIFT, or Youth Regional Reduced Fare Permit card. Further options to resolve the violation also include the offender performing 2 hours of community service at a local non-profit. The new program provides options to those who cannot afford full transit fare instead of simply issuing a citation.

Current Security/Fare Staffing and Fare Policy

Under the City's current and proposed new Interlocal Agreement (ILA) with King County governing streetcar operations, all security, law enforcement, and fare inspection and enforcement on the Seattle Streetcar is the City's responsibility. No fare enforcement officers authorized to issue citations for non-payment are currently deployed on the Seattle Streetcar. Likewise, the streetcar does not have security staff that ride and monitor the streetcar like those deployed on Sound Transit Link Light Rail trains.

Currently, a Metro Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Supervisor provides one hour of randomized on-board fare inspections per shift (two shifts per day) on each line. These inspections do not result in citations. In general, an O&M Supervisor boards a streetcar and uses a handheld scanner that directly reads the customer's ORCA card to determine whether it has been scanned prior to boarding in the same way that Fare Enforcement Officers (FEOs) check fares on Metro's RapidRide lines. Additionally, paper fares sold by platform TVMs are inspected. Although the goal is to provide an inspection once per shift, staff shortages can sometimes direct a supervisor's time elsewhere with the occasional shift being missed.

Inspections are governed by a King County Metro streetcar operations Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) which provides the base level details regarding how fares are to be surveyed. These include employee demeanor when requesting fare, avoiding judgement in case of non-payment collection, and data compilation and administrative functions related to fare survey.

Acceptable fare media for Seattle Streetcar includes ORCA cards, paper tickets dispensed by streetcar TVMs at streetcar stations, and mobile tickets sold through the TransitGo app. The vast majority of streetcar fare revenue comes from ORCA. In 2018, 86% of SLU fare revenue came through ORCA, and 92% of FHS fare revenue came through ORCA. Seattle Streetcar is not considered an ORCA affiliate, but rather a mode under King County for ORCA revenue distribution purposes. Streetcar ORCA fares are a subset of what is provided to King County as part of its ORCA agreement. This arrangement reduces ORCA administration costs for streetcar. As part of ongoing streetcar operations oversight, SDOT is working with King County to increase audit and oversight activity for ORCA fare distributions.

Ridership and Fare Revenue

Ridership on the Seattle Streetcar system grew significantly in 2018, due to major increases on the FHS line. Despite this increase, SDOT has not observed a commensurate increase in fare revenue. 2018 ridership on the First Hill Line¹ increased by approximately 31.5% over 2017. However, fare revenue increased by only 9.9%. Ridership and fare revenue on the SLU line both decreased by approximately 4% in 2018. Overall, these totals added up to a combined system-wide ridership of 1,673,400 riders, an increase of 18%, or approximately 256,000 riders, compared to the 2017 total of 1,417,500 riders. A summary of ridership and fare revenue for 2017-18 follows:

¹ As reported by King County Metro to the National Transit Database

		2017	2018
South Lake Union Streetcar	Ridership	535,288	513,523
	Ridership Increase	3.2%	-4.0%
	Fare Revenue Total	\$ 759,148	\$ 730,067
	ORCA	\$ 658,355	\$ 625,702
	TVM	\$ 100,793	\$ 104,365
	Fare Revenue Increase	-3.0%	-3.8%
	Avg. fare per rider	\$ 1.42	\$ 1.42
First Hill Streetcar	Ridership	882,219	1,159,904
	Ridership Increase	5.0%	31.5%
	Fare Revenue Total	\$ 769,349	\$ 845,407
	ORCA	\$ 709,780	\$ 780,208
	TVM	\$ 59,569	\$ 65,199
	Fare Revenue Increase	-4.5%	9.9%
	Avg. fare per rider	\$ 0.87	\$ 0.73

The factors contributing to why SLU, despite fewer riders, generates a higher fare per rider and why FHS, despite more than twice the ridership of SLU, generates only 16% more fare revenue, require further study and data collection. SDOT does not currently have data available to attribute the dynamic shown above to lack of fare payment. Below are a few examples of fare payments and products that could affect revenues collected by the FHS:

- Riders paying with an ORCA card may be transferring from other modes at a higher rate, thus the streetcar receives less revenue per boarding from those rides. The streetcar has the lowest base fare amongst modes (\$2.25). The combination of this low base fare and higher transfer rates results in the streetcar typically receiving the lowest return on fare. For example, if a Link Light rail rider pays \$4.50 fare for their ride, and then transfers to the streetcar (\$2.25), the streetcar will net a proportionally smaller share of the total fare between the two modes.
- Multi-day passes sold through ticket vending machines (TVMs): the more a rider uses that day pass, the less money is received per ride.

Fare payment is not currently enforced on the streetcar, and before enacting fare enforcement, SDOT proposes to collect more data about ridership demographics and fare payment behavior in order to better understand the potential causes of the differing dynamics of ridership and fare revenue.

Peer System Analysis

A review of two peer streetcar systems that require fares for boarding include the cities of Portland, Oregon and Cincinnati, Ohio. In Portland, two full-time fare enforcement officers provide primarily customer service and security functions with the ability to issue citations for non-paying customers. Portland implemented their officers in 2016 after years of operating on the honor system under which fare inspections were conducted as a survey/data collection function only. SDOT has contacted colleagues in Portland to determine whether any data that would support a before/after analysis is available.

In Cincinnati, the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA), the operator of the City of Cincinnati-owned Cincinnati Bell Connector streetcar, employs City of Cincinnati police officers primarily in a customer service and security function with the ability to issue citations for non-paying customers. Cincinnati contracted this service early after the start of revenue service to provide security presence and deter non-paying customers.

Recommended next steps and timeline

There is an immediate need to address the increase in security incidents on the streetcar, and a need for more information on rider fare payment activity before implementing a more stringent fare enforcement program. SDOT recommends contracting with Metro to deploy Metro RapidRide FEOs to increase security presence on the streetcar, and to administer rider surveys and collect data on current rider fare payment activity. The Metro RapidRide FEOs are experienced and trained in doing this work on Metro buses and are qualified to do this work on the streetcar.

Deploying the FEOs provides several benefits:

- A uniformed presence deployed as a customer service/security officer could provide a visual deterrent to undesired behavior and help assure riders and operators that streetcar security is being monitored.
- Help SDOT better understand fare payment activity on current lines by administering surveys to riders over a pilot period.
- Serve as customer service “ambassadors” who can help educate passengers on how to ride the streetcar, remind riders to tap ORCA cards, and gradually introduce the public to seeing an increased uniformed presence on the streetcar.

Metro fare enforcement officers would also be trained on streetcar policies and procedures. Over the pilot period, these ambassadors would be instructed not to issue citations. SDOT would evaluate the data collected and determine next steps for fare enforcement policy on the streetcar.

With approval of this proposal and prior to deploying streetcar “ambassadors,” SDOT streetcar staff would work with Metro to develop an implementation plan and schedule that would include:

- Development and posting a code of conduct on the streetcar; this code of conduct would reiterate relevant state law governing rider conduct on transit
- Development and deployment of a rider survey instrument
- Development of educational materials (in conjunction with SDOT communications staff, the Mayor’s Office and Metro) informing riders of the code of conduct and encouraging proper fare payment
- Coordination with Metro to develop standard operating procedures for ambassador interaction with riders
- Determination of outreach needed, including discussion with key stakeholders

A more formal timeline for this work will be developed pending approval of this recommendation and would be dependent on level of outreach and coordination required with Metro and key stakeholders. Pending these factors, fare enforcement activity could begin as early 2020.

RSJI Analysis & Implications:

Deploying fare enforcement officers comes with Race and Social Justice implications. The FHS line touches Pioneer Square, the Chinatown/International District, Central District, First Hill, and Capitol Hill, while the SLU line touches South Lake Union and the northern part of downtown Seattle. There are many potential equity issues given the diversity of neighborhoods and populations served by the FHS line. If fare enforcement is deployed with a focus on FHS, additional analysis of potential RSJI impacts should be conducted in conjunction with SDOT Transportation Equity Staff and key stakeholders. SDOT recognizes the importance of completing a Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) to ensure equity concerns are proactively addressed and would recommend a RET before implementing a more rigorous fare enforcement program.

Other Policy Issues:

Transit Riders Union contacted SDOT with a request to accept paper bus transfers and other fare products, including Link Light Rail day passes and single use paper bus tickets, that Metro provides to human services agencies for low-income riders. Currently such fare products are not accepted as a matter of policy on streetcar, though absent fare enforcement officers to check fares, riders holding these products are able to ride without fear of citation. However, TRU has asked that we allow these products to be used on streetcar so that potential riders holding these products who may not currently ride streetcar for fear that they will not be permitted to do so, may ride. If this policy change is implemented, the Streetcar would receive no revenue at all for these rides as the City has not negotiated a revenue sharing agreement with Sound Transit (for Light Rail day passes) or Metro (for single use paper bus tickets).

Indicate Legislation and/or Council action:

None.

Please give a brief overview of any financial impacts:

Contracting with Metro to provide fare enforcement officers as described above would cost approximately \$125,000 per year.